dwellings, stand with the gabled side facing the village square and look just like them except that they are firm and durable. Storage houses are to be found only in the villages of wealthier chiefs.

The houses for strangers (esă'bă̋d) are built following exactly the same pattern and ground plan as the ordinary dwelling, but they are very hastily constructed: the walls are usually only plaited palm leaves; the door extends to the ground with no threshold; and the sleeping benches are those of the simple kind (kū'dū III), often made only of umbrella tree trunks split lengthwise down the middle and placed on top of two casters of the same wood. They are constructed especially on the occasion of the festival for departed souls when greater numbers of strangers are expected; at the conclusion of the festive period they are pulled down.

In the forests or on very isolated plantations, refuge huts are frequently built. These are often no more than mere protective roofs (myō e ngī III = gorilla home), while others resemble the simplest temporary meeting houses, that is, huts in which the gabled sides are open and the long walls are either absent or consist only of a few tree trunks (angṓn e ngī = gorilla crown, that is, the strip which juts out like a comb on the top of the gorilla's skull). /79/

Special houses are built next to or behind the dwellings or just outside the village for persons with contagious diseases (frambesia, leprosy) (see Fig. 16). Because they are designed for only one person, they are usually smaller than the dwellings; they have the same shape but are carelessly constructed and soon deteriorate because nobody takes the trouble to repair them.

Here and there I found stables; in the next section I shall come back to these. /Fig. 42 appears here in the original text./

Finally, it should be mentioned that in some villages especially those close to the coast, there are houses on piles. These are copied from the European settlements and are almost completely useless for the natives since their construction requires greater care and trouble than that of ordinary houses. Consequently, the houses on piles built by the Pangwe are veritable caricatures of human dwellings.

231 [435] as medium-sized female goats and sheep (14 marks or 200 spears). Just as among us, the dogs have their own names which are taken from 231 552 the list of human names or else allude in jocular fashion to the characteristics of the animals. Frequently, indeed, these swine-snouted curs are given a first name and a patronymic, just like people, or since for obvious reasons it is at times difficult to establish the paternity of the dog, it is given a first name and its mother's name, thus, akut-e-mban.

Among human names applied to dogs I was able to discover the following: ndǫ̌no (a very ancient man's name; see pages 68 and 69); asǒn (umbrella tree, man's name); mvǭnō (Satan's ape, Colobus anthracinus Leconte); ondō′ (?, man's name); ntōde-abǎ́n (single otter, woman's name); mfū′mežǫ̌k (the white of the elephant, that is ivory; woman's name); mbǎ́n (ivory, woman's name).

Other dogs' names are: obǭnǒ (from obǭn = bead, one adorned with beads, perhaps also a woman's name); olŭ́n (the tree Rinorea dentata [P. Beauv.] O. Ktze.); ebǒ′nenǫ̌n (one who always lies on the bed); aji′zǫ̌k (a jī′ = to yearn, zǫ̌k = elephant; in other words the one who yearns for elephant meat); angŭ́n (dog's bell); odzǎ′m (dwarf lemur, Hemigalago, because the dog bounds through the bushes like the dwarf lemurs in the trees); akū́t (the stupid one).

231 ● 556 Goats and sheep, which the Fang put together under the name kabad, are kept as an investment, as pets, and only in third place as livestock for slaughter. While the economic life is otherwise considered from the viewpoint of "food," this strikingly recedes completely into the background concerning domestic animals where the main point is the joy of possession. We thus have real "savings," the purpose of which is to store up bride money. This has its familiar consequences: thriftiness carried to the point of avarice; a piece of [260] meat allowed only on very rare occasions; and no distaste for the enjoyment of animals that have died.

231 The goats (ekǒ′le) are just as unpleasant as the dogs because of their annoying habit of making a hullabaloo at night and because of other indecent and repulsive characteristics. The only domestic animal that we find congenial is the sheep (ntǔma I), Figure 57, but here, too, the bad example of the goats frequently spoils good manners. They "specialize" in producing, especially at night, /106/ /Fig. 57

785 554 831 from four to six years old. They are thus consecrated so that one day they will surpass all others in insight and understanding; then, through their spiritual superiority, they will acquire influence, power (knowledge is power!), and especially wealth. In the case of the son, this will be to his own advantage; in the case of the daughter, it will benefit the father who can get a higher purchase price for her than for a girl with the usual loose way of life. In other words, the "savages" know well the value of moral purity. /269/

831 785 [184] The custom of miǎk consecration was formerly practiced throughout the Pangwe region. Nowadays, however, since warlike times have ceased, it is to be encountered only among the Fang of the central Uelle region. I should like to compare the custom [171] to the practice found among us during the Middle Ages, whereby the heads of important families (especially princes), after some lucky success (for instance, in war), destined one child for the clergy and consecrated it to the pure life dedicated to God, frequently not without calculating the advantages that could accrue to them from such an action.

785 789 556 831 [824] The procedure of the consecration feast is as follows. The child, clothed in a small loincloth, is led to the medicine man and is washed by him with a medicine water. The medicines used for this are barks of various trees that bear ample fruit, such as the Pseudospondias microcarpa (Rich.) Engl. (ofŏs), so that the child's understanding may bear fruit as abundantly as these trees or, in other words, so that wealth may fall to its lot in the same abundance as the fruit of these trees falls to the ground beneath them. The various barks are placed in a container made of banana leaves, and hot water is poured over them. After the ablution, the child must swallow the principal medicine, a bundle of ngon [824] with the chopped leaves of certain "weak" plants, such as Hibiscus moschatus (Roxb.) (tége III, from a tĕk, "weak," because [833] the fruit is cooked in a short time), in order to make the child equally weak, that is, sexually incapable. Furthermore, the ngon [825] is mixed with chicken meat -- the chicken is the bird of day, of the good and the pure, and at the same time it is supposed to point symbolically to the wealth that is desired for the child (the chief, the "Very Rich One," is regarded as the privileged son of the

831
785 sun) -- or with elephant's meat, in which case the child is sup-
556 posed to become spiritually great and important, just as the ele-
[825] phant surpasses the other animals physically, or, finally, with the meat of the hedgehog -- the child is to get as many things as the hedgehog has quills (1).

[539] 1. A well-known proverb, to be intelligible, would have to be translated into Pangwe something like this: He is as full of stupidities as the hedgehog is full of quills.

785 Thus, the child becomes miăk. Its loincloth is taken off
831 and from now on -- be it male or female -- it must go about completely naked. Here is another significant fact regarding
[834] the moral-religious view of the Pangwe: clothing, that is, the
[291] covering of the sex organs, arose because the sense of shame (o-so-n) which started with the first sin (n-sö-m, root so), that is, sexual intercourse, demanded it. If the innocent state (ignorance of sexual matters) is artificially restored, clothing becomes unnecessary.

The miăk are generally respected. People are careful not to speak to them about sexual matters or to seduce the girls, espe-
[684] cially since /270/ the protection which they are accorded by custom is effectively strengthened through the right of the father or the relatives to shoot down the seducer without further ado wherever they find him. Nowadays, however, the old customs have been somewhat relaxed; the miăk are not always what they ought to be.

Annulment of the chastity obligation takes place in the same solemn manner when the consecrated person is fully grown, in other words, not before the age of 20 years. In the case of the man, it is required that he prove himself the bravest in war or at least that he has shot an enemy (1). In the case of the girl, it is

[177] 1. Today, in the regions influenced by the Whites, this decree has had to be moderated.

[583] required of the suitor that, contrary to the usual custom, he pay

581 554 562 specific social meaning; it creates bonds (abè) which fasten together the family and clan groupings. Curault points out that this imposes a "close union, in spite of divergencies in language and in spite of the palavers of the different parts of the Pahouin people." At the same time, marriage [120] has a personal meaning. In traditional [556] Fang society the possession of many wives is the principal sign of wealth and the condition for all increase of wealth. This wealth conditions the importance of the social role; it makes possible the acquisition of a kind of personal power in a society with hardly any hierarchical system. (1)

1. Let us point out that two words with the same root, éval and évala, mean "polygamy" and "a prop, a support," respectively.

836 Because of this personal element the competition for women can become particularly keen. Very early, government reports pointed out the frequency of palavers due to the "women question," and they continue to complain of them as being characteristic of "Fang society and psychology." Let us state at the outset that the competition does not concern the sexual services demanded from the woman. For the unmarried men there are various compensating possibilities -- but only in the line of "lustful sexuality," to quote the expression of R. Bastide. (2) The young unmarried people have

2. R. Bastide, Sociologie et Psychanalyse [Sociology and Psychoanalysis], Bibliothèque de Sociologie Contemporaine, Paris, 1950.

complete sexual liberty among themselves: it is the custom called azɔ̀ya-angɔ̀n (azɔ̀ya, fornication; ngɔ̀n, maiden). E. Trezenem states in his monograph on the Fang of the Ogooué that "virginity of the woman is considered of no importance," that "the young 836 504 girls are free to give themselves to whomever they want." Then he adds an "important restriction," saying that there are practically

V. First Reactions to Material Inferiority

556 441 The access of the Fang to the traditional trade regions has had great consequences. What started out as a conquering and "colonizing" undertaking has imperceptibly changed into a search for manufactured "riches" (bium) and [157] competition for trade routes and trade centers. The quest for "merchandise" is the primary male activity and sets in motion the machinery of war and witchcraft.

[462]

829 773 The legends which we know stress the attraction of the West as the country of white men who have all riches at their disposal. One of these told by V. Largeau suggests the importance of access to these trade zones:

"We arrive at last at the N'Tem and the Ogooué where we meet those who distribute riches . . . they give us everything, we become rich." (1)

1. Op. cit., article: Instruction.

The legendary texts collected by Father Trilles under the title "Noirs et Blancs [The Blacks and the Whites]" are particularly significant. A predominant place is given to the theme of wealth, held only by the white men. Wealth has escaped the black men -- because of a lack of technique and because of an attitude of abandoning rather than dominating the world, (2) or

2. "Proverbes, Légendes et Contes Fang [Fang Proverbs, Legends, and Tales]," op. cit., and especially "Noirs et Blancs [Blacks and Whites]" and "Légende du Nsas [Legend of the Nsas]."

has been stolen from them. (3) The whites apparently represent

3. "Legend of Bingo"; and "in order to seize his treasures (from the hero

441 presents." (1) The latter analyzed the Ogooué commerce which was

1. Voyages et Aventures dans l'Afrique Equatoriale [Travels and Adventures in Equatorial Africa], pp. 106 and 120.

"under the thumb of the Fang population": "Firms were obliged to maintain their establishments in definite localities and were forbidden under threat of hostilities to move them upstream. The European agent was respected; far from being disturbed, their stores were strictly protected by the village warriors. The merchant was a prisoner of the population; he found himself invested with a monopoly." (2)

2. Op. cit., pp. 294-295.

441 556 829 The first government reports continue to note, like Du Chaillu, the desire of each large grouping to have a trading post for itself; once satisfied they would relax and be submissive."(3)

3. Rapport annuel de 1907 [Annual Report of 1907], Archives of Gabon.

This behavior is not explained by the single economic anxiety to reserve for themselves a monopoly and to have at hand the possibility of bartering. To have a trading station in contact with the village itself is to have reached the end of migrations westward which were to lead to the source of wealth; it is to participate constantly in this wealth and to have the certainty of a superior life. To enter into relations with the white man, who appears both as an "eldest son" and more than a human being with his riches and knowledge of riches, this is to participate in a circuit of power and fecundity, and to transcend a somehow cursed existence in order to attain the "true life."

829 773 On the other hand, the legends show how, in contact with technical manifestations and European enterprise, the Fang very

245 occupations keep them away from their native villages, try to build up plantations, even though they may draw no profits before their retirement. Among Boulou or Beti every married man is a cacao planter. In the course of a sample survey of 490 rural families, only 43 (less than 9 percent) were found who do not have some income from a cacao plantation (1): 7 live from the sale of different agri-

1. J. Binet, Budgets familiaux des planteurs de cacao au Cameroun /Family Budgets of Cacao Planters in the Cameroons/, O. R. S. T. O. M. /Office de la Recherche scientifique et technique outre-mer/.

cultural products; 15 are engaged in crafts; 9 are salaried workers, employed in trade, missions, the administration. For the 437 other families cacao is a basic resource.

245 The large number of proprietors is accompanied by a wide distri-
556 bution of wealth and by a certain amount of social equality (2).
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511

2. Sautter, "Le cacao dans l'économie rurale du Woleu-Ntem /Cacao in the Rural Economy of the Woleu-N'Tem/," Études centrafricaines, 1951.

Nevertheless, financial differences are clearly marked. To take only cash income and to disregard home consumption, 28 households had available an average of 3, 720 francs C. F. A. per annum (3).

436

3. One franc C. F. A. equals two metropolitan francs. Incomes were computed in 1954, a year during which quotations for cacao were especially favorable.

113 households had 10, 000 francs C. F. A., 217 had 29, 600 francs, 87 had 71, 500 francs, 36 had 152, 000 francs, 5 had 440, 000 francs. Large incomes coincide with enormous plantations, but also with
295 profits from a variety of sources: of the 5 families with the highest
511 income, only 2 derive theirs entirely from cultivation. Of the 36 in
556 the next lower category, 24 have a purely agricultural income. The

245 [511 55L] distribution of cacao plantations is neither the only nor perhaps the principal cause of inequality. Cacao production is on a considerable scale: around 50, 000 tons in the Cameroons, 3, 000 tons in Gabon (4).

[433]

4. Almost the whole of the Gabon output comes from the Woleu-N'Tem region and especially the Ntoumou cantons. (P. A.)

It is easy to understand that this crop is an essential factor in the 182 evolution /sic/ of Pahouin society.

245 In the field of common law, for example, cacao has affected the orientation of land law. By giving each person the possibility of making /33/ private profits, cacao has increased the independence of men and even of women from family authority. Because it allows the accumulation of durable and tranferable goods, cacao has raised, in a new form, the problem of successional devolution /inheritance/.

To consider only the realm of technology: settling on the land during several generations has apparently put an end to real nomadism; villages are no longer moved about. But a certain amount of shifting cultivation will remain inevitable if some method of rapid reclamation of fallow land is not adopted.

245 The stock of tools has increased considerably. An axe with a small, 42 narrow head ending in a tongue was fastened into the large end of a wooden handle, a daba similarly made but with a rounder head and lighter handle (1) and a machete were formerly the basic implements.

[284]

1. The tongue of the hoe, driven into a branch like a spike, is also bound to it with liana. Old women still use the digging stick, which has or had some ritual significance. (P. A.)

To these must now be added pruning shears, caterpillar destroyer or a local copy, and cacao spear.

245 Boxes or baskets provide vats for fermenting the /cacao/ beans, a roof shades the trays on which they are put to dry. Some men have thought of buying Vermorel vaporizers for spraying the cacao trees; others dream of mowing machines for clearing the land.

6: Alexandre and Binet--41 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 FH9 Fang FH9

3. Trade

Planters command few sources of income; beside their tool equipment a thousand new needs have arisen, which trade must satisfy.

There is, oddly, no commercial tradition at all among the Pahouin. For bride-price payments previous generations used ivory tusks or pieces of wrought iron in the shape of arrows. But was this a form of money? Nothing was bought, nothing sold. And yet, according to Balandier, the pursuit of wealth represented the men's principal activity (2) aside from routine work, perhaps, moreover, because

> 2. Cf. Largeau (no. 48) for the mythical role of the spider in producing merchandise "among the dead." (P. A.)

there was no trade or exchange. From the accounts, it appears that previous generations could only obtain goods from distant countries by bilaba and not by purchase. The bilaba approximates the potlatch in being a contest. During a visit a host gives his guest all kinds of presents, defying him to do the like. Later the guest will have to offer even more than he received. Thus, exchange and a struggle for prestige are involved at the same time (3). Bilaba apparently were

> 3. J. Guilbot, Journal de la Société des Africanistes, 1951, Vol. 21; G. Balandier, Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique noire /Contemporary Native African Sociology/, P.U.F. /Presses Universitaires de France/, 1955, p. 182.

means of distributing objects of European origin (salt, weapons, clothes) and of exchanging them for ivory collected in the interior, game, or the dogs that some tribes /34/ eat. In general, it is to such exchanges as these that the old accounts refer. But one can scarcely speak of trade for such ritualized gifts and countergifts. And nothing else warrants the assumption of an economy based on exchange. Between Yaoundé and Brazzaville there are no markets, or, more correctly, the markets that now exist were started by Europeans or at their instigation (1).

shed with a roof low enough to /43/ give good protection from the sun. Some villages are placed at right angles to the road; others follow an L or Y plan, with several minsen. Family "allotments" are separated by hedges of euphorbia, castor-oil plant, hibiscus, and bougainvillea. Sometimes one comes across sheepfolds, although in old-style (and most contemporary) villages small livestock roam at will. A village often includes a guesthouse (ayak).

In building operations the man generally takes charge of the framework and the laths, leaving to the women the preparation and application of the banco /clay daub?/. But European-style huts with their elaborate door frames and often cement floors are more and more the work of specialized artisans, who are paid to supervise the family labor provided by the owner. These men have nevertheless preserved, along with the English term "mason," the old name nloñ nda, literally, hut-weaver, which goes back to the time when huts were made of sewn bark (1).

1. The dwelling continues to evolve: framed doors, windows, and shutters are in general use today. The dimensions of the buildings lead to the construction of a real frame. Finally, to possess a sheet-iron roof is a sign of wealth. In recent years there has arisen a real passion for the improvement of dwelling: in the Cameroons we may estimate that 10 percent of the dwellings now built in the bush are the most modern type. (J.B.)

2. Groupings and Relationships

The main divisions of Pahouin society are both exactly defined in the minds of its members themselves and at the same time uncertain for the European observer, who is constantly tempted to state them clearly in organic forms accessible to his "logic" and who is hindered by the variations or the dialectal confusions of Pahouin terminology. Father Trilles, basing his observations on the Fang of Gabon alone, reached a sort of palaeontological reconstruction of the "Fang nation," extremely theoretical, yet not without basis

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P
563 Bekôé, are now assimilated and are considered a special Pahouin ayôn
565 (see above, p. 54). But the nomadic groups themselves are beginning to give up the obligatory intermediation of the Pahouin in order to sell their game; they are to be seen at markets and even in government offices and in the courts.

F Foreigners, bone bikul (ékul = foreign tribe), had no rights except
609 as guests or hosts, beyeñ (sing. nneñ), which means that they had in fact to buy security. Since European conquest there has been an increase in the betabe (from tabe = to stay, to dwell), privileged strangers admitted to residence by the head of a family or village, often allied by marriage to the clan amid which they have settled. Their children can be absorbed but are not true bo'beti, at least not
F in the first generations.

56 Thus truly Pahouin society was and remains very much a closed one, since entrance into it is, in practice, only by blood. On the other hand, it is very little stratified internally, outside of age grades; it might even be said to be averse to hierarchies.

F At first one is rather tempted to conclude that there are no castes.
564 This statement is perhaps too sweeping, if we take into consideration the fact that certain endogamous clans like the Ndôñ are perhaps castes or represent former castes. The subject deserves further study. /60/

Does Pahouin society admit of social classes based on birth or
F wealth? In spite of the egalitarian and anarchic temperament of the
● 556 Pahouin, I think this is so. Terminology proves it by distinguishing
565 the bo' beti not only from the captives but even from the zesé bôt, the humble people: mo'nti is often translated today as "Monsieur." Within the last two generations there has grown up before our eyes a real bourgeoisie of large-scale planters, clerks (bekilak), artisans, and skilled workmen, which is inclined to stand out against a lower class of small peasants, laborers, and even, at the moment, of a "proletariat in sunglasses" — petty tradesmen, etc. —a local equivalent of our white-collar workers. Already in traditional society the minkukum, the rich, were to be distinguished from the common people, the zesé bôt.

556 The rich were looked at askance and were objects of suspicion to
565 the general public, always quick to attribute material success to the
431 possession of an évu (évur, évus), to malevolent sorcery. The
437

nkukum had to excuse his wealth, primarily by distributing it through customary hospitality and also by a special device of economic-social control resembling the potlatch, the bilaba.

This practice seems to have been especially common among the Boulou. Bertaut relates the word to a Ngumba root meaning "to talk," "to cajole." I should rather incline toward a derivative of the verb lap, "to draw water," by extension "to splash," which can figuratively also convey the idea of scoffing. It is not impossible that the bilaba mechanism was connected with that of the joking relationship, awusô. The bilaba begins with a challenge from one nkukum to another, each man claiming to be the richer. The challenger goes to the house of the challenged, carrying a load of merchandise, mebo me dulu, "legs for the journey," and accompanied by a large retinue of musicians and singers, etc. When he reaches the home of the other njem bilaba (bilaba dancer), he overwhelms him with presents and taunts; his opposite number replies, present for present and jeer for jeer, until he has contributed more than the equivalent of the mebo me dulu. The first njem bilaba goes home and waits for the other's return visit with his own mebo me dulu. Visits and countervisits may go on for a long time, each of the bejem bilaba calling on his immediate family for help, then upon his lineage or clan, for continued supplies. The bilaba therefore comes to be a collective affair. It must be observed that not just any kind of merchandise is exchanged: a njem bilaba in the east (nku, ôku) provides local products, (livestock, cacao, ivory, etc.), in the west (nké) imported products (loincloths, salt, powder, etc.) (1). It should be remembered /61/ in this

1. M. Zoll'Owambe (no. 125) speaks of akum so, "merchandise of the north," imports, and of akum nsak, "merchandise of the south," products of the country. But there appears to have been some confusion. In fact, so = coast, downstream, is related to nké = west, which also means downstream, while nsak = hinterland, upstream (nku = east, related to kui = to come from, rise from, emerge); cf. Largeau, who considers the north to be on the right (male) and the south on the left (female). Imported products would be considered male.

connection that the points of the compass have a sexual implication, which is not well understood. The bilaba sets up a sort of joking relationship between the families of the participants, which may continue after their death.

The institution seems to be dying out, though it was still flourishing between the two /World?/ wars and often involved considerable amounts of money (1).

1. Balandier (no. 175 and in a personal communication) stresses the economic importance of the bilaba which, in a society without a money or trade economy, constituted one of the principal means of circulating goods and, especially, of diffusing imported commodities.

In spite of the fear his success inspires, and perhaps because of this fear, the rich man enjoyed undoubted authority in his village and sometimes beyond it. Nkukuma, the absolute form of nkukum, is used to translate "chief" (it probably means, more precisely, "person of note").

The word évet, also applied to subchiefs or government "capitas" is likewise used --a correct nuance if, as Bates says, évet is a corruption of headman applied originally to the chiefs of trade caravans. These men were chosen for their business astuteness, diplomacy, authority, and courage, but they were only deputies of a clan or village, not true political chiefs. To convey the latter implication the preferable term is still nzôô bôt (Fang, nzoé mur) from zô = to say, to command, a term indicating a de facto state, /état de fait/ rather than a legal notion. It should be recalled that there were no political leaders other than the seniors, mintôl, of the extended families. Their authority was further limited by the ease with which their brothers could leave the village to establish another nearby (2).

2. But among some Pahouinized peoples the existence of royal insignia shows that chiefship /chefferie/ is an institution: among the Ewondo and Yanda the head of the clan designated his successor or, if he

yet takes the risk of a breach of faith on the ñyale's part. The latter is supposed to return the flock intact, but as long as he tends it, he may do what he wants with it, putting it to use like a kind of credit. It is as well to point out that this kind of contract, which at present is falling into disuse, gave occasion to endless litigation.

The trade contract under its old name abom or the newer atiñ kilak or atiñ akus kaka is, on the other hand, becoming more and more widespread. A trader, nkuan biôm or mbi fatyélé, advances to a kilak (from "clerk") cash and goods on the kilak's undertaking to provide the equivalent in a certain tonnage of cacao. The contract is set forth in a written "good for...," which represents recognition of the debt. The kilak exerts himself to collect the promised tonnage, usually by buying from planters of his clan, sometimes by subcontract with "small clerks," bone bekilak. The contract has a due date, with the usual contingencies; in the case of rising prices, the kilak may run into difficulties and not be able to furnish the promised tonnage unless planters of his family give him credit or sell to him below the price. Cacao buying is also done by commission, the agent, nlôman, (envoy), receiving a cash advance with which to buy as much cacao as possible. Both methods give rise to litigation, which is all the more common because the moneylender is usually a European or an African of another tribe, a "Gabonese" in French Equatorial Africa, a Bamiléké, mone galifis (from Coast English "Grassfield") in the Cameroons.

In general a commission is always possible, whether in making a contract or in pleading in court. The person giving the commission is called mve ngul, giver of power; the agent is called mbili ngul, possessing power. They are jointly and severally responsible.

The bilaba contract, described about (41, 77), is disappearing. There survives, however, a sort of poor man's bilaba, the meyeñ, from nneñ, guest, which allows a nsé môt, a humble man, to levy a kind of tax on the rich, minkukum, of his clan by the simple procedure of going to visit them, carrying a present /81/ which must be returned by generous hospitality and by a countergift of higher value. This is a quasi contract, sanctioned by public opinion, which is a heavy burden on people thought to be rich; it underlies the family parasitism prevalent in large towns. The reputed nkukum who tries to escape would be accused of being hard hearted, nlem ayet, which could easily lead to a charge of sorcery.

ethnic groups in the same region, the Boulou subjects being classed first on these points among the Pahouin tribes. Intelligence tests and mental-age evaluations made among school children and lycée students gave similar results in comparison with Africans of the same age. On the other hand, a comparison with European children living in the Cameroons showed a certain inferiority, from which it is still impossible to draw definitive conclusions because of the scarcity of "culture-free tests" used at the time. Projective tests administered under the same conditions revealed schizoid tendencies with rather marked aggression and a fairly high frequency of the Oedipus fixation with some transference /assimilation/ from father to white man. The difference in level from neighboring tribes was less clear among the lycée students than among school children, and less clear among the latter than among the laborers at Edéa. It must be emphasized that these tests, especially the projective ones, involved a limited number of persons in particular situations outside the village milieu, that remains the background of the majority of their fellow tribesmen. I am not acquainted with the results of later research.

With regard to social psychology, we are also largely restricted to subjective evaluations in the same class as those mentioned at the beginning of this section. Alégret a half century ago remarked upon a defeatism more bitter since the Fang had come in contact with Europeans, and certain legends reported by Trilles and Largeau on the Jacob and Esau theme, with the white man in the role of the usurping younger brother, go some way to confirming this. Balandier has given a good description of contemporary expressions of this feeling of collective frustration, both in his Sociologie actuelle and in various articles, one of them with the significant title, "Les Fang, conquérants en disponibilité" /The Fang, Unattached Conquerors/, (nos. 175 and 173).

One striking trait, also emphasized by Balandier, is that of collective mistrust of successful persons. This may appear to contradict the previous statement about Pahouin individualism, but in fact it is precisely /90/ this individualism that produces a good share of the suspicion of the other individual (cf. in Eno Boto, Ville cruelle, no. 182, the reactions of the hero Banda vis-à-vis the rebel Koumé).

We must also point out the psychological and social importance of akum, wealth, and of bôm, possessions, especially imported possessions. Combined with the as yet little-studied concept of the

relations between the sexes, this emphasis to a great extent explains why no true peasantry has developed, but rather a class of nonpeasant planters, comparable in the last analysis to some of the European settlers. The Pahouin remain very much strangers and travelers on the land, whence the importance of personal property (in the legal sense) in their eyes. Nevertheless, a further development is in the making in this connection—described above (p. 96) which is leading to a strengthening of land ownership, /so that/ certain collective reactions in the way of procedure concerning land and domain suggest that we are witnessing, at least in the Cameroons, a genuine putting down of roots.

Tribal pride is still considerable, to the point of hostility between different branches of the group, but ethnic cohesion is found vis-à-vis outsiders and gives real unity to the Pahouin as a solid group.

2. The Individual Life Cycle

a. Conception, Gestation, Birth

A woman is considered pregnant, a nyoñeya abum, she has got a belly, when she has passed through four menstrual cycles, a nji yene ngon, without seeing the moon. Conception is supposed to be the result of the mixture of sperm, meyôm (with the same root as nnôm, pl. beyôm = male) and of menstrual blood, metyi me ngon, girl's blood or lunar blood; the length of pregnancy is calculated from the date when the last menstruation should have begun. Nowadays a pregnancy of nine months is considered normal, but some of my informants mentioned normal terms of eight or ten ngon (lit., moon or girl), a word that can as well refer to a calendar month as to a lunar month or a menstrual cycle. It is difficult for a man to obtain more precise information on this point since the subject is restricted to women. Besides, longer pregnancies are considered possible, though sometimes suspect; amenorrhea due to a fibroid growth is a proof of sorcery, the tumor being considered an évu. The fetus (for which the term is secret, forbidden, étyi, in any case for men, and probably for women uninitiated into mevungu) is thought at the beginning of gestation to take the form of a lizard, like the first man at the moment of the creation /of the universe/.

Next, the establishment of urban and rural municipal councils permits financial decentralization. Towns under the term "urban communes," cantons, and sometimes whole subdivisions under the term "rural communes," received a legal character, with a domain to manage and a budget to fix. Elected councilors under an appointed mayor had to study plans for road works, to set up construction or maintenance programs, inquire into taxes? /taxes/ and assessments /impôts/, and have an eye to a sound financial position.

In towns this was nothing new, but its extension to wide rural areas was an experiment. Boulou or Beti country, where there was no risk of these new methods giving offense to a strong traditional /social/ structure, was the ideal place for trying out a new /kind of/ organization.

Throughout the elections arranged to fill the posts of councilor, we can see crystallizing the most striking traits of the new élite, the characteristics of the aristocracy or oligarchy that will get itself into power.

Pessimists had expressed fear that such elections, based on almost universal suffrage, would overthrow the classical social values and impair the prestige of the present acting élite.

This point of view disregarded the fact that in a country practically without stratification, no one can keep authority without the support of public opinion. /132/ Granting the vote to vassals in a feudal society may unsettle the power of the nobility. It is quite otherwise here, where chiefs of village or canton are most commonly chosen by election.

The older men have preserved a privileged position vis-à-vis the younger generation. A comparison of the age pyramid of councilors with that of the adult male population as a whole readily shows this: (table on following page).

The younger generation is poorly represented. Mature men of thirty to forty are represented in proportion to their ratio in the total population; but men of forty to fifty or of the older age group are heavily represented. Electoral influence has not been seized by the younger men.

Neither does it appear that the poorer class, more numerous than the rich, has benefited from the ballot so as to eliminate the latter. From the point of view of the possession of a certain amount of wealth, we can assert that municipal councilors are much better off than the common people.

Distribution by Age

Age Group	Elected Municipal Councilors	Total Adult Male Population (1) (Nyong-and-Sanaga)
	Percent	Percent
20 to 30 years	9	26
30 to 40	33	29
40 to 50	37	28
Over 50	20	15

1. Evaluation made according to censuses established by the subdivisions; the documentation is not faultless but nevertheless is indicative.

The figures given below for the whole population are not definitive, but as they have been taken from a recent complete census they may be considered good approximations.

Distribution of External Signs of Wealth
(for 100 persons)

	Masonry Houses	Bicycles	Automobiles
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Municipal councilors	27	50	11
Adult male population of Ebolowa	1.4	21	0.3

Not for nothing do the Pahouin use the word nkukuma (rich) to designate a chief. The chosen leaders are the rich men. /133/

A study of the matrimonial situation enables us to be more specific about the personal characteristics of elected men. Polygamy is much more common among them than among the population as a whole.

6: Alexandre and Binet--169 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 FH9 Fang FH9

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Distribution According to Matrimonial Status

	Municipal Councilors	Sample of the Total Population of the Boulou and Beti Area (1)
	Percent	Percent
Polygamous	43	23
Monogamous	43	63
Unmarried	3	14

1. A random sample taken for the study of family budgets, 1954, op. cit.

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That councilors are often polygamous is to be explained in terms of their relatively advanced age and their wealth.

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As elderly possessors of wealth and polygamous, do the elected men embody all the traditional ways in contrast to a progressive younger generation? An examination of occupations, of educational level, and of religion reveals that the actual situation is more complex.

Distribution by Occupation

	Municipal Councilors	Adult Male Population of the Nyong and Sanaga Region (2)
	Percent	Percent
Chiefs	30	1.8
Planters	30	85
Office-holders	14	0.5
Trade employees	3	1
Traders	10	7
Craftsmen	5	7
Catechists, mission monitors	2	2.3

2. According to the annual administrative report; approximations are involved, Yaoundé-Ville being excluded.